

Weekly Update from Administration for 12/07/11
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

We are excited to welcome the Cheney Brothers, Inc. to Charlotte County. Their new distribution center will be built near the Punta Gorda Airport and will bring hundreds of new job opportunities to the area. We have worked hard to bring new companies to the county, and will continue our economic development efforts to bring more jobs and quality companies to Charlotte County.

Illegal dumping

Our solid waste environmental crimes deputy arrested several people in November for illegal dumping. These crimes are felonies that range from the illegal dumping of yard waste and tires to household garbage. The environmental crimes deputy and the solid waste code enforcement officer actively investigate and pursue those who dispose of waste illegally. To report illegal dumping, call 1-866-Y-DUMP-CC (1-866-938-6722) or visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.com and click "Report Illegal Dumping" to fill out a form.

USSSA tournament

Our Community Services department hosted the USSSA Baseball Tournament in the latter part of November. Teams throughout Florida competed on the fields at North Charlotte Regional Park, Harold Avenue Recreation Center, and the Charlotte Sports Park. An estimated 2000 people attended this event. Twenty-seven teams participated, which included 265 athletes and 67 coaches.

Economic impact data has been calculated and we estimate that the weekend tournament generated \$237,175 in direct expenditures for Charlotte County. It's estimated about 470 spectators watched the games. The tournament returns to Charlotte County Dec. 9 through Dec. 11.

Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival

The Charlotte Sports Park hosted the 12th Annual Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival last month. The free event featured vendors, exhibits, and musical entertainment, and an estimated 1500 people attended the event. Community services provided environmental hayrides through Tippecanoe Environmental Park. Community services staff had a booth with information about our environmental parks and Conservation Charlotte preserves, birding lists and viewing locations, beach-nesting bird information, and learning activities for the kids. Staff had a second booth for a kids fishing clinic where they received a free fishing pole and tackle box after learning how to properly cast a fishing pole, properly de-hook a fish, and identify what fish to keep and what fish to release back into the water.

Our solid waste division and Keep Charlotte Beautiful participated in the event, distributing literature and educational materials regarding the national recognition Charlotte County has received for our recycling and significant advances made in our community. Staff spent the day answering questions and awarding prizes provided by the solid waste division and Waste Management, Inc.

Growth management staff participated in the children's discovery zone at the nature festival and engaged children and families in land use planning activities using the Lego exercise and explaining planning concepts. Children received information about zoning, planning and reading blueprints, courtesy of Junior Achievement materials contained in the City Planning unit.

Library use

According to our latest figures, we have 158,666 registered borrowers in the county library system. This number is an increase of over 8,000 from the end of 2010. The public internet computers at the libraries had 119,758 uses by our citizens over the last year, and 11,843 people received technology instruction. Our libraries offer many programs in addition to a wide array of materials. Locations, hours and an events calendar can be found at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/Library.